

THE SUNDAY TIMES *magazine*

SEPTEMBER 30, 1973



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THE SUNDAY TIMES *magazine*

Contents, September 30, 1973



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*An Advertisement printed in the Public Interest,
on behalf of The Sole Purveyors of Weppes
in the United Kingdom,
or for that matter, the World.*

This issue contains **PART VI** of **A CONCISE HISTORY OF WEPPEs.**

PART VI. **The Soda Weppe:** **How it Missed its Waterloo.**

This episode is devoted to the modest, yet full of character Soda Weppe.

And tells a tale concerning the Weppes in Soda Water and Napoleon's defeat at Waterloo.



A CONCISE HISTORY OF WEPPE: PART VI



The Soda Weppe: How it Missed its Waterloo.

Everyone knows that Napoleon should have won the battle of Waterloo. What they don't know is why he lost it.

The Emperor had a lifelong habit.* Each night he charged his glass with brandy and Soda Water with Weppe. The modest, yet so full of character Weppe, that tasted so clean and cool when mixed with the fiery spirit.

Le Fauchaire, the French historian, believes that a seemingly trivial incident concerning Soda Weppe swayed fortune to the side of the British. And that the battle of Waterloo was lost even before it began.

Le Fauchaire tells the story something like this:

Imagine Waterloo on the morning of the 18th June, 1815.

Marshal Ney knocks on the door of Napoleon's quarters in La Belle Alliance.

"6 a.m. Emperor," he calls out politely.

An hour later he knocks again.

The waiting officers see the door slowly open. And Napoleon stands before them. He is a sorry sight.

A weak hand clasps his ashen brow, his eyes are shot, and his mouth is drawn into a thin red line.

He is also in a very bad temper.

"Who packed my baggage?" he bellows in French.

*E. B. Blazes' "La Vie Militaire Obscure Sous L'Empire."

The officers silently look at their boots.

"Well, whoever it was, they packed my Eau de Vie, but not my Eau de Weppes."

Le Fauchaire's Theory.

This, Le Fauchaire believes, really did happen. For some time during the night before, Napoleon wanted his habitual glass of brandy. Reaching into the secret drawer of his military chest, he hoped for the familiar bottle of Soda Water with Weppes. But there was no bottle.

And so it was that the Emperor consumed quantities of his favourite brandy, unsoftened by the airy gentleness of the Weppes in his favourite Soda Water.

Their absence was soon to change the course of history.

'Hangover at Waterloo.'

There can be little doubt that Napoleon arose that fateful morning with a frightful hangover which severely affected his judgement. In short the loss of the Weppes may have cost Napoleon the Battle of Waterloo.

After the battle, the Emperor, understandably piqued at his lapse, decreed that his favourite Soda Water should henceforth carry a black label. It still does to this day.

The Moral.

The moral Le Fauchaire states, is abundantly clear: you can't win a battle if you've been out of your Wellingtons the night before.

Le Grand Petit

A little brandy. And a little more. And more than a little Soda Water with Weppes. Behind every little brandy, there's a great Weppes taste.

A Bonny Boney

Dash a double Scotch onto the rocks. Pour over Soda Water with Weppes. The unobtrusive Soda Weppe calmly lifts the whisky to a new level of good taste.

The Hundred Ways

The Weppes in Soda Water mix well and open up a whole new empire of tastes . . . with brandy, whisky, orange, lemon, Dubonnet, Campari and wine.

PART VII—'The Inimitable Tonic Weppe'

will appear in the issue of 28th October.

Open a bottle of Soda Water by Sch. And you can taste the Weppes.

'I BLAME ENGLAND'

The situation of young blacks in Britain is potentially the most serious social problem of this decade. The Government Think Tank has just spent three months trying to examine the causes of the rising black generation's hostility and bitterness. But such inquiries are hindered by the black community's suspicion and open antagonism towards white institutions. To find out how young alienated blacks see themselves, Peter Gillman and photographer Colin Jones spent six weeks at the Harambee project, a hostel in London's Holloway Road for black teenagers in trouble. On page 47, four others who are trying to make it in Britain talk about their experiences

Once again, a pane of glass is being replaced. This time it is the window in the door of Brother Herman's tiny office. It was broken when a boy hurtled into it from the main room during some nameless dispute, already forgotten. Herman has asked the boys themselves to measure the frame and buy the glass, and they make the usual good-natured attempt to keep some of the change, easily foiled by Herman's scrutiny of the obviously altered receipt. The glass itself is two inches short. Herman shrugs. It's unlikely to last long enough to matter.

When Harambee House first took over this condemned butcher's shop in the Holloway Road two years ago, there was a large plate glass window at the front. After that was smashed, Herman nailed a sheet of corrugated iron over the aperture. Then, thinking that a hostel, a place of refuge, deserved something better, he took down the corrugated iron and put up glass again. But this time he divided the window into three panes, so that one breakage would be less catastrophic. Sometimes the front windows are broken from the street, customarily after closing time on a Saturday night. "It's useful, to judge the aggression," says Herman. "If they're broken from the outside then it's all out there. If the boys do it, I know it's all in here."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Paul, 18, who wore an afro haircut and had a lighter skin than most at Harambee, had been there →

Teenagers play dominoes in the main room at Harambee, an abandoned butcher's shop





for two months. "I get kicked out of me house. Me old man didn't like the way I was going on. I was hustling, raising money here and there, not working for it, and he didn't like that so I just said I was leaving. I went out on the Saturday night and he locked the door and wouldn't let me in again. I was just out of the Navy. I was in the Navy just over two years and I got kicked out of there. I hit this officer. He was trying to f— me up, see, so I just hit him one day. It was a way to get out because I didn't want to stay in for nine years. It was the only way I could think of getting out.

"I joined the Navy to get off a probation order. I got that for absconding and breaking and entering, something like that. I was living in a children's home in Leeds and then I came down to London to live with me old man. I didn't like him then and I decided to take off. We used to hustle money and go raving every night and they catch us and give me a probation order. They said well if you join the Navy they take you off probation order so I joined the Navy.

"I was born in Leeds. Me dad come from Nigeria, me mother come from Barbados. My parents separated when I was about one and I went back to Barbados with my mother for two or three years and then we came back over here again and then I live with my grandmother and then I was living in children's homes. I lived there until I was about 13 and then I was living with me old man. That's when I ran away from home. I was just 15 when I joined the Navy.

"I'm going to try and get my own place soon. I'll get a job soon. I need some steady money. I'm a telex operator. I had a steady job, but I got the sack two weeks ago because I kept coming in late. I'll get settled down one day. I'm only 18 and I don't believe in saving money. I could die tomorrow, right? My last job paid £35 a week and I used to spend £35 up at Brixton in one day. I want a job I can move around in and not this eight till five routine. I get a bit bored with them.

"I don't know if it's more difficult because I'm black because ➡

Near right: three in a bed at Harambee. When boys walk out of their homes, Brother Herman is reluctant to turn them away. Far right: four of the hostel's younger boys







I don't know what it's like when you're white. But you always get this thing like when I went for a job up the road and the man he says: 'You don't mind if we call you a black bastard or a wog or a nigger or anything because it's entirely a joke.' I told him to keep his job. Him say: 'I'm not colour prejudiced,' and everything like this. But it's foolishness when a man asks a question like that straight away.

"When I was small I used to go around saying that I'm English and I'm proud of being English. But then it suddenly hit me that the English didn't want me to be an Englishman so then I thought I'll

never be an Englishman. It's difficult. You're always a bit confused in your brain.

"I'm doing what I want to do now. Not all what I want to do. It's difficult, isn't it? Because you need money. If I did everything I wanted to do right now I'd want a few thousand pounds. I want to go back home to Barbados and all these things. I call Barbados home. This not home. I call Africa home. That's home. England not home. Because I don't belong here. Even though I was born here I don't belong here and I don't call myself an Englishman. I don't call myself nothing to do with the English race in fact. They look upon

me as a stranger so I look upon myself as a stranger in this country.

"It was slow realising this. It was a gradual build up. You look around and you notice things. Once upon a time I never even noticed I'm a black man. Once I used to think I'm the same as everybody else. But then I started realising. The first time was in 1965 when they had the riots in Watts. I started looking at all the things in the world and realised I got to act like a black man and got to be proud of it and everything.

"I like to enjoy myself. All the black people like to enjoy themselves. I enjoyed myself when we was roaming round the streets, I

slept out a couple of nights. Then I grew wise and started staying at a spaz's (friend's) house and making a bit of money on the side, selling ganja [cannabis] and thieving a bit here and there. We used to get up early in the morning and thief the food off the doorstep.

"I blame England for what's happened. It's England who put me down and say you're a black man even though you're born in this country and you can't do this thing and you can't do that thing.

"I just take it for now because I can't do nothing about it. I just got to take it until some chance come along. Then I can f— somebody



up. Get back what's owing to me. But that chance hasn't come up yet. It might take a long time. I'll see it when it comes though. The older generation of black people in this country still turn the other cheek and we can't get it together as long as there's people like that around. We've all got to think in our mind that we've got to f— these people up and get back everything's that owing to us."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

A boy wearing a black velvet cap, pulled forward and down so that the peak hides most of his forehead, stands in Herman's office. A small canvas holdall rests at his feet. "It's

not luxury accommodation," Herman tells him. "The whole thing is that rather than rely on here, you look around, get a job, get a place to move out to. There's a lot of brothers we have to help and by getting a job you will help us. I'll put you up in the top room with another brother and get you clean blankets and the brothers will help organise your food for you. I should keep your bag in here otherwise someone will steal out of it."

On a small low table in Herman's office rests the telephone and a milk-bottle with four daffodils. On the wall, a poster of Kwame Nkrumah. To the back is the tiny scullery where

the evening meal is prepared: its door has a large metal clasp and is six inches thick, for it was once the butcher's cold store. Herman wears sandals and a yellow dashiki shirt, like a smock, with the shape of an island embroidered in the centre and the single word 'Freedom'. He sits on a chair whose cover is worn away, exposing nails and a wooden frame-work. "It frightens me when I get comfortable," Herman says. "I don't want to be worrying about the furniture all the time."

In the main room, where the meat was sold, three boys squeeze on to a metal radiator, the most popular seat on chilly days, and now conceive

Harambee is a refuge from society, from "out there" — and before the boys go back, says Brother Herman, "we have to make absolutely certain they know they are black" Left: discussion group. Right, above: Yvonne (centre) and friends. Right, below: fish and chip supper

with use. There are four wooden chairs besides. Two other boys stand by the thin curtains and watch the heavy lorries rumbling up the Holloway Road, spray blossoming from their wheels. A prison van passes, and one boy turns to the others: "A sweatbox!"

In the top room, up four bare flights, the new arrival sits on the mattress that covers his bed-frame and looks out at the acres of devastation where Islington council are clearing space for a building scheme - eventually to claim the butcher's shop as well. "When I heard I was coming to a hostel I thought it would be more like a house," he says. Aged 18, he came from Jamaica when he was eight, and has lived in Bristol since then. But his parents had gone back to Jamaica during the six-month borstal sentence he had finished that morning. It was for shop-breaking.

"Is it easy to get a flat round here?" he asks another boy who walks in.

"No, guy."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Eustace, Asian in looks, with a green beret pulled well down over his shoulder-length black hair, was staying at Harambee for a while.

"I don't stay at home. As I'm not at work my old man don't really like that. My mother think the same. But they can't make you do it. It's not like when you were younger. Now you're older you know what you're doing. They didn't go through the things we have gone through. When they heard that you've got into trouble and they come to the police station to bail you out and you've got to go to court, they say, 'all my life I've never been to court and you just come and you go to court'. They don't know why these things go on. A guy like Brother Herman understands and that's why he tries to help."

"I went to get a job once and it said 'young lad wanted' on the window. The man said, 'we haven't got any vacancies', and I said 'but I saw the sign on the window', and he said, 'well somebody got that last week, I'd better get the sign taken down'. And two weeks later I still see the sign up there. Maybe if I was a white boy I'd still not have got the job. But as soon as the man see me - he just didn't really want to know."

"You're asking me if I've had a lot of experiences like that. Well I've got to laugh. You wouldn't really know. You've never been through nothing like that and I don't think you'll ever have to. Not in this century anyway. I don't know if I expect you to understand. You'd only understand when you're in that position and it happens to you. You go to court and you can't really tell the judge about what the policeman said

to you because he don't really know about them kind of things. That boy, who got 20 years for mugging. Mugging is a bad thing and people don't supposed to do things like that, but that boy come from a broken up home and never had any money, but the judge can't understand why because his children never have to go through a thing like that."

"We were sitting in between two bus stops, so we'd run for whichever bus came first, and two police walk past and just looked at us and went on walking, and then a third police came along and looked and went along, and then he took his radio and called the other two and they came back and we were still sitting there and they said what are you doing there? and we said we were waiting for a bus and they said what bus? and they start asking us all questions, our name and all that. And then our bus came along and they wouldn't let us get on the bus."

"I was born in St Lucia. I was seven when I came over. I remember ... things were more free. You could run about where you want to run about. If you want a fruit, a mango, you just pick it and start eat it. And the sun was hot. You never say boy I feel cold and wrap up with clothes. You just feel nice. Do you get what I mean? You look around and you see the blue sea and the beach and the coconut trees hanging over and the banana trees. It's all green and nice and beautiful."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Herman left Antigua in 1955. A bricklayer by trade, he was Welfare Officer at the ill-starred Black House at the other end of the Holloway Road, until he became disillusioned with the demagoguery of Michael X and the unrelenting antagonism of his approach. Whether or not white society caused their problems, he decided, the most pressing need was immediate help for the drifting black youths he encountered, trapped in a circle of largely amateur crime followed by borstal or prison, followed by more crime ...

The first home for the project was a Wesleyan Chapel in the City Road, provided for Harambee - an African word for 'co-operation' - by the Rev Colin Morris. Then, from Islington council, came the butcher's shop, with a grant of £1500 a year; further money came from the Inner London Education Authority, the British Council of Churches, and the Rowntree Trust. There was opposi-

tion on Islington council because Herman emphasised the needs of black youths; and in 1972, 23 residents around Harambee signed a petition for it to be closed. But the council turned them down after its Director of Social Services reported to them: "Harambee fills an immediate and urgent need ... at present we do not yet meet the needs of the young casualties of the host community, let alone of those youngsters who have the additional dimension of their blackness to contend with ..."

Some of the boys at Harambee are on probation; others in the care of, or under supervision by, Islington council, and have been 'placed' there by a council social worker. Others may have walked in after a row at home. The 'N' Division Community Liaison Officer, Chief Inspector Williams from Upper Street police station, calls at Harambee every fortnight or so to talk to Herman: the noise in the front room subsides to a hostile silence as he disappears into Herman's office. "Harambee is the only hope for some of those kids," he says. "They have rejected the society in which we live and it's the only place where you could attempt to get them back into society again. Some of the officers regard it as a den of thieves. But the people in there do not exist because of Harambee. Harambee exists because of them, and there's nowhere else for many of them to go. We do go there looking for people and if we ask to be admitted we aren't refused." He points out that of 10,000 West Indians and their children in Islington, only 15 or 20 are at Harambee.

At Michael X's Black House Herman was the only one who would even speak to the police; and at Harambee some of the boys criticise him for having any dealings with them now. But today Herman has discovered that one of his strongest critics has persuaded another boy to give him £6 from his weekly social security payment of £7.87. Herman attacks. "You talk about your black men and helping the black people and you're the first one who try to destroy it."

"You just pick on me uncalled-forly," says the boy.

"How I pick on you uncalled-forly? By taking that money you destroy this project."

"You blame me for every f---ing thing go wrong in this place. Everything that don't work you're blaming me blaming me blaming me."

"You see that little boy sitting down in there? A telephone call come from probation service. Another like him was to come out, but he can't come out no more because we don't have the room for him. Which is to say that he have to stay there in jail longer. He's not an isolated case. There's a vast amount of young blacks in his position."

"Who got him in that situation?"

"I don't use that f---ing rhetoric. I'm going to do something about them. You can take that up with the intellectuals. I'm not an intellectual. I'm a grass-root worker. I don't have time for that f---ing argument."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Two of the girls who visited Harambee faced charges following an incident in the local Wimpy Bar. According to one, the cashier had told them they were 2p short when they paid for their meal. They disputed this and the manager phoned for the police. "They're all the same," a waitress told the officer who arrived. The girl went for her, the policeman dragged her off, and she pushed him to the floor. She was charged with assault. As she had been in trouble before, she was afraid she would be sent to Holloway.

"I'll miss my nice bed, my nice double bed, I'll miss my good food, and I must miss my boogie on a Saturday night. I like cod and chips, I like rice and peas and chicken, I like saltfish and ackee, I like pea soup, I like fish soup, I like banana ... they say I'm getting fat."

"And she's a bloody alcoholic as well," said the other girl involved.

"All you care about is sex."

"I don't think about it."

"She doesn't think about it, but when she gets it ..."

"I make the most of it. Why not?"

"She's not frightened of getting pregnant. She don't think she can get pregnant. That's the trouble, she wants to get pregnant."

"I started quite late. I'm not like you."

"How old were you when you lost it?"

"Fifteen years eleven months and two weeks."

"I lost mine when I was thirteen. As soon as I lost it, whooff, I was pregnant."

"Born lucky, ain't she?"

"I'm born unlucky."

There were four girls who visited Harambee regularly. They wore boots or shoes with giant platform

Property Sharks
Barracade Home



Beckford: "I never used to hate white people. I still don't hate all of them. But it's them who teach me how to hate." With him are Mylene (right) and her friend Jennifer 35

soles and swapped their clothes with each other; the most popular item last spring was a knee-length black ciré skirt. One, Mylene, sometimes brought her two children to Harambee, where the other girls lavished attention on them. "It's good to know I can breed up," she said one day.

"If and when I do get married my husband can have loads and loads of kids. I want a nice two-floor house and my kids can have their own bedroom and I want a nice sitting room, a double sitting room, a nice fitted kitchen, fitted bedroom, all my kids dressed in nice clothes... that's if I get married. I don't mind what my husband do. I leave that up to him. There's only one thing, he must love him kids. He must put kids before everything. He must be real nice and sexy-looking. When I was at school I had a white boyfriend, but if I had one now, them downstairs said if I brought him in they would drag me away and kick the hell out of him and kick the hell out of me. And there's all this problem about kids, about half-caste kids. I feel sorry for them because they don't really know what side they belong to."

Yvonne, aged 18, came over to England when she was 11. "My mum is quite a pleasant person really and my dad can be pleasant and sometimes he gives the impression that he understands you. He's 44 and he's been in this country 17 years. He's a driver for British Rail. He worries a lot about me. He suffers from high blood-pressure and every time I get into trouble he has to see the doctor. He tries to hide it, but I know he's worried because he loves me. I'm his only daughter. My mum thinks I'm mad. She thinks the things I do no sane person would do because I stay out late and get into fights. I can be aggressive, I suppose, but not unnecessarily. If I've got to be I will be. I don't like being pushed around. I accept here as home because I'm here now. But I'll never call it home. I miss Jamaica. I'd like to go back, but not just yet. When I'm 24 or 25."

Mylene: "They say that home is what you make it. Life is what you make it. Somehow we've made life rather rough for ourselves. It's up to us to change it before it's too late. As far as I'm concerned it's too late for me. I suppose I'm a disgrace to the black community. Instead of trying to help I'm just going ahead and getting myself into trouble and that's

lowering the black people instead of raising them up. But I don't mind white people.

Yvonne: "I tell you straight. I'm not prejudiced. But if a white woman call me a black bastard then I'll call her a white bastard."

Mylene: "If they call me a black bastard I say 'I'm black and I'm proud of it, but a bastard I am not'. I have been here 12 years and when I first come, after nine o'clock if you are a black man walking on the street then I feel sorry for you because them teddy boys just took it as fun to come up to a nigger and grab him. But now that more black people have got together and said, 'we have come to this country to see if we can make a better way of life for ourselves and our families', they have started to think and started to fight for their rights. That's the only way we are going to get anywhere. If you know you have a right to a thing and you can't get it by talking then by all means fight for it. We have the right to anything we want. Anything that we want we should get. A Mercedes Benz or a Mustang or a Rolls-Royce. A house, or a whole street. Nothing is too good for us. If they offered one family Buckingham Palace they might say 'yeah, that's not too bad, we can always have a boogie in there'. If I had Buckingham Palace I'd take out all the paintings and have a really big house-warming party there. It could go on for weeks."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Herman has just received a letter from a boy who, since arriving from the West Indies seven years ago, has spent six-and-a-half years in approved school, borstal, and prison. "I am not too anxious to be out at an early time, not until the charges I face now are settled. I am making a try now to become myself and settle down. I guess I have nothing else I could say, but I will try to settle down, to please myself and others that have taken an interest in me."

He stayed for a brief time in Harambee before his last conviction.

"Here," says Herman, "is not enough for him."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Beckford had known Herman at Michael X's Black House; when Herman moved out he went with him, and helped clear out and paint the butcher's shop when Herman took it over. Aged 18, dark, quiet, unhurried, good-looking, he seemed to draw the girl visitors to him: when they had news to tell, it was to him

they reported, clustering round, an arm in each of his. He had recently come out of borstal and was staying at Harambee again, one of three full-time helpers from among the boys whom Herman paid £15 a week.

"As long as this project is going I'll stay here because I'm not going to work for no white man. This project is very good. There's lots of black people in jail now. But when black youths get nicked Brother Herman gets somebody to go and bail them out and otherwise they'd go to Ashford [a remand centre] for probably three months. And they could be free tonight. And if they want somewhere to sleep, because lots of black people walk in the streets, they just come and sleep."

"I've got five convictions. Two of them is stupidness - sus, receiving ice-cream. The other three were robbery and I didn't do any of them. On one I spend six months on remand and I went to the Old Bailey and the jury find me guilty and the judge fine me 10 shillings. Ten shillings and I spend six months inside and the judge have the cheek to ask me if I had the ten bob on me now."

"I don't want to work for no white man. Black people have been working for them for a long time. I don't want to work for them. I never used to hate white people. I still don't hate all of them. But it's them who teach me how to hate. Some of them might like you a little bit but they still hate you deep down. I've done 15 months inside altogether, locked away for things I never done. How can I like people who locked me away?"

"I'm always trying to stay out of trouble. But I got stopped on the street about two weeks back. There were three of us standing waiting for a bus outside a bank and these four policemen just come around us and say they want to search us and what were we doing here? It was uncalled for really. It was young ones. You can stay cool but it looks very embarrassing. Sometimes you get mad and you get nicked for assault - you just have to push them away and it's assault. They come and put their hand in your pocket. You can't let them do that. Even though they say they have the right to do that. You say you'll turn your pocket out but they say no, they still want to search you. You say no and the fight starts like this and the next day you're in court. Then you get six months or something. With my record if that

happened to me I'd get recall or else I get 18 months. I just come out five weeks ago.

"I come from Jamaica when I was 10. We used to be free. You didn't have to have money in Jamaica. There were pears, breadfruit, mango. Anything you want. You just eat. The place itself is better. You didn't get in much trouble. The police didn't pick on you that much. My parents came over before I came over. I came over four years after them. They were looking for a better thing. My father's gone to Canada now. He's a motor mechanic. My mother went back home at Christmas for a holiday."

"Herman say he have nothing against white people, but I have got a lot. They f--- me up all the time. To me this country is going to turn just like America if they go on the same way. You have Enoch Powell talking about the black population and all this f---. He's trying to steam up some heat. Him might succeed if he carries on. And that's big trouble for the black community. If there's anything like a black and a white fight I'm willing to die. Yeah. Everybody's equal. It doesn't matter about them skin."

"Jamaica is home man. I would have gone this Christmas only I got nicked. I hope to go back this Christmas for holiday. If you give me £200 now I go home. For good. If Enoch Powell want to give away money let him come to me first. Lots of people would like to go home now, right. Most of them say 'rassklart, I come over here, I want some money to go back home with'. So they want for some money. If Enoch Powell come out with this thing of giving people £2000 to go back home with and them fare, a lot of black people would just go back. I know that most of the young ones would."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Sir Lord Power, the Killer Sound, played every Friday night at a Methodist hall at Archway: a 1000 watt sound system run by four of the Harambee boys. At its peak a year ago 600 or 700 boys and girls would pack into the hall, whose windows shook to the bass vibrations pouring out of the speakers in each corner. At first the audiences were mixed, black and white. "But then," explained Eustace, who helped to run the system, "there was that song *Young Gifted and Black* by Mike and Marcia and when we played it all the skinheads used to



Leslie, in the yard:
"Black men
aren't supposed to
buy nothing . . .
everything's
supposed to be at
our feet"

sing 'young gifted and white' and they used to cut the wires to the speakers and we had some fights and less white people used to come up after that." Now, with perhaps 200 people, nearly all black, coming to hear them, the group have just enough left over after paying for equipment repairs to buy a chicken-and-chips supper on their way back to Harambee. One week they had a booking to play at Lewisham Town Hall, but no-one arranged for a van to take the equipment: they were due there at eight o'clock. They finally found a man who said he could pick them up at nine or so if they couldn't find anyone else, and sat waiting for him until midnight in Herman's office, clustered round his tiny table playing cards for 2p stakes.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Brother Herman's main helper at Harambee is Brother Sam, also from Antigua. He worked there full-time until a year ago, when he told Herman that the project should be directed more. But he still calls three or four days a week and sits in the back office, enabling Herman to visit boys in prison or remand centres; and he still believes in the absolute need for Harambee and other refuges. He came to Britain in 1959.

"Our family life and our culture were destroyed when we were taken from Africa to the West Indies. We have no language as such, or no communication through our own lives. We have only the culture we learnt from the English. We came to believe that England is our mother country. We thought somehow we were entitled to come to our country and adopt a British way of life. We expected to fit in with society. When we came we found something different. We didn't know about prejudice, discrimination - things like that.

"We have lost our identity. We have lost our originality and we are using a sub-culture which doesn't fit. The boys at Harambee are even more lost. They don't belong here, and first they look back to the West Indies for their roots. Then they turn to Africa. The English culture is alien to them. They cannot relate to it, cannot be themselves. They are like an animal which has lost its way from the trough - going here, going there, trying to find out where it is. They try to create an identity from what they have - their sound system, reggae, each other. And they rebel by robbing and violence.

"They should be helped to cultivate an assurance and a footing so that they can make the first step out. They need to learn how to get about in this society. There are the barriers of getting a job. They feel that the worst jobs are being reserved for them, the jobs the whites won't do. Many of their parents came here to escape unemployment in the West Indies.

"In Antigua I knew men who were out of work for 10 or 12 years. Coming here 10 or 15 years ago they accepted the situation. Many who came were from the country areas and they were pleased at any opportunity to better themselves. Now they have a home, a car, a television set. They say look at what I have achieved in life - you should do the same. But their children who grew up here and have been to school with white children see life in a different way. They are not prepared to accept the worst jobs. They reject their parents' values - and then their parents reject them. They don't care what pressure their children have to bear. They just expect them to go and do the work. They may say, either you get a job, or you get out. And many of the boys get out. Out into the street, out there. Then they are in a survival situation.

"Black kids have no chance of power in their hands. They don't see themselves as belonging here at all. They see the policeman as a wicked man who carries out the laws of the society which is against them. There are some boys at Harambee who could go one way or the other. I've seen some finish in prison, others who have sorted things out. For some Harambee is a purifier. They come in bitter and antagonistic, they go out knowing who they are. We need more Harambees in London and in England. Harambee is a buffer between society outside and themselves. They come in and they get to know what's happening and what's going on."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Paul returns to Harambee after going for a job as a telex operator in Holborn. "The first thing the guy asks was, 'were you born here?' I said yes. 'Who do you mix with?' 'Black people.' 'What do you do in the evenings?' 'I go to clubs and such.' 'I bet you've got a chip on your shoulder - and I don't like your haircut.' So I tell him what to do with his f---ing job."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Leslie, short, slim, very dark, had been out of borstal a week. "I want to

get myself sorted out. I want a place of my own. I want a job by the end of the week, help me out a while until something better comes along. But they ask you all them questions - have you been to borstal, have you been to prison? I had a job before but I left it - engineering. I was there about a month. I just get fed up with work. I don't like working for no f---ing man. I want to work for myself. I like to be boss. I don't like to take orders. I've been taking orders too long. Prison, prison, prison. Prison drives you mad. All that shit, man. You can't have this in, but you can have this.

"I was inside 18 months. Burglary and I got grassed, by a white guy. He grassed me up. When I catch him, him dead. We just used to do it for fun, really. I wasn't living in London then. I was living in the country and I came up for the day and I got f---ing done. It wasn't planned. It was a house in St John's Wood. We just walked in. I would have been in 11 months but I had a fight with some white guy and cut him with my razor blade. He was trying to show me that he was the bad john. I just put him right. I just show him he ain't no boss over me, boy.

"I come from St Lucia. I was nine when I came. My parents came over three or four years before me. I stayed with my grandmother until I came. When I first come I think of this as home. When I was young I thought this was nice. When I was older I find it's not for me. I left school at 15. I only done a bunk a few times, but I was in trouble with the police and they kicked me out.

"I want to go back home. But you need money to go back home. I think a lot want to go back because they find out it's easier to live a life of their own back home. You got people watching you everywhere you go. Police, police, that's all it is, police.

"I had plenty of time to think of what I was going to do when I was inside. I want to help people - black people. I don't want to help nobody else. Black people are right down and they need help. Paul here went for a job and the white man says you've got an afro haircut and you've got to change your hair-style. If it had been me I'd have kick him down. I'd have kick him rassklatt down. I'd have kick him in his c---. I---ing bastard.

"Look at all them black women selling their f---ing oats. Selling themselves. All them black people are

selling themselves. I used to have a whole load of women before I went inside, but they all f---ed off and I'll have to get a new pack. They get me angry when they don't want to give me my thing. Women, women, women are nice, sweet. You see all them black men who are buying white women. And them giving them all diseases. Course them bloodklatt do. Black men ain't supposed to buy nothing man. We're supposed to be there. Everything's supposed to be at our feet. In Africa everything was at our feet. Diamonds and gold and everything. They just come and they take it away from us. No man, that can't be. I tell you one day black people are going to come strong. One man can just come and make black people listen. I believe in Malcolm X. He wasn't afraid of anyone. He go anywhere and shoot them. I want to go the way Malcolm X showed me. Because if you want to free black people you've got to do it one way, boy. Power only come out of the barrel of a gun."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

One blustery morning the curtains in the first floor windows are billowing through the window frames like flags: the windows have gone again. "It was one of the £15 boys," says a boy on the radiator. So enraged was one of Herman's helpers at the boys lying in bed and refusing to help with the cleaning up, that he seized a pot of paint and hurled it through the window, smashing the panes and streaking floor and blankets with cream gloss. "Useless f---ers," he storms. Even so, one boy slept through the upheaval, waking at midday and crashing down the stairs to complain: "Some bastard's broken all my windows."

Later that day, Herman sends two boys out to buy more glass. "With all the glass we have bought now we could have built a block of flats," Herman observes. There's a lot of tension in Harambee that day, he feels. "They are not ready to go out. You can't send them out the way they are now." Then Paul, who has been helping to replace the glass, hammers at Herman's door. "I've got rassklatt paint on my rassklatt jacket," he yells. "I don't give a shit for your jacket," Herman explodes. Ten minutes later he gives Paul 20p to buy paraffin to try to remove the paint; Paul takes the money silently and goes out. That evening, the boys ask Herman for a meeting; and they decide that everyone

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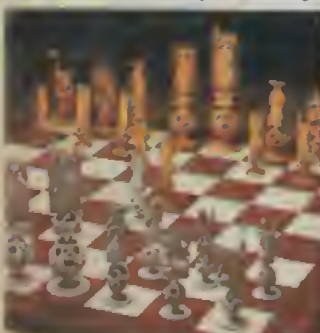
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The youngest boys at Harambee are 15 and 16. Four of them have stayed out one night, sleeping in a railway carriage in a siding. Now, explains Herman, they hope to persuade him that they should pay less rent that week. Of their £7.87 weekly Social Security money they are supposed to give Herman £4 for food and lodging. One of the boys decides to come into the office to argue it out. The most defiant of the four, he wears a battered suede jacket, a tartan cap, and a crucifix on a chain of beads.

"I ain't staying here no more you know."

"Hm?"

"Me a go home. Me mother tell me last time I must go home."

"That's right."

"Yeah what you take me four pound for?"

"How much you pay the first week?"

"One pound something. The second week I pay four pound."

"How much you pay last week?"

"Last week I never paid none. But I never eat. Sunday I never stay here. Monday morning I come in."

"I'll tell you why you pay four pounds. You have a giro here for £7.87 from the Social Security. We charge you £4, but £4 cannot feed nobody for a week, sleeping them and feeding them. I want you to appreciate that. Just that. And there are many times when you still eat and still sleep and you don't pay. But if I give you back all the money I'm not doing you no good because you're not building yourself up to go and face out there. And the whole idea is to throw you back out there and make sure you face out there. The whole idea..."

"I'm going back home."

"All right. As soon as you're ready to go home you tell me and I'll take a taxi up there with you and have a talk with your mother. Any time you're ready."

"What you want tell my mother?"

"Well I want to tell your mother that we set a place up that's not going to encourage you to leave from home. It's a place that when you're upset you can come and stay and when you come back home we feel nice because that is what the whole project is all about. It's not to take you away from home, it's to get you back home. So if you want to go home I'll ring for a taxi and we'll go straight up there.

You bargain for that?"

"No I was going home tonight."

"What time you want it to be tonight?"

"I tell you I'll just go home."

"No just tell me what time you want it to be tonight."

"I'm sleeping home tonight anyway."

"All right we'll order a taxi. What time you want to go tonight?"

"Well, me going up Brixton now."

Herman laughs. The bluff has been called.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

First boy: "If there was a few of you together and you wanted to do something exciting, you just used to do it for that. We didn't used to hurt nobody when we did it. We used to do it especially to queers. They were all about the place."

Second boy: "When you do it, most of the time you do it for some money. I remember one time up Finsbury Park we did it to this guy, me and two other guys, one of them hold him by the neck and the other one hold his two hands, and I got at his pockets and I got ten shillings. Then some man yelled at us and we didn't have a chance to go for his inside pocket. But we didn't beat him up or nothing."

First boy: "I remember one guy, a big guy and there were four of us and one - he's inside now - jumped on him and he says, 'F---ing hell you c---, I'm a police officer.' We let him go and we was running and I was at the back and this guy went to get me and I had a bottle and I threw it at him and we never got caught."

Second boy: "When you ain't got nothing at all and you get a pound it's a lot of money. You've never been in a situation like that. You're living at home, but you want to go out tonight and you ain't got no way of getting any money and you're just walking down a road thinking of a way to get some money and all of a sudden you see this guy and you say well..."

First boy: "Especially if he's on his own. Queers. They're well off. We usually go for them. We went into this toilet and there was this guy and one grabbed him and I went for his pockets and he was going for his pockets at the same time and I feel the knife and I grabbed it. He said he lived in Southampton and he had about one pound something and when we let him go he just shoot off. Then there was this old guy and I put my hand in his pocket and I pull out all



pieces of paper. I thought it was all pound notes, and I ran up the road and I looked at it and it was all f---ing tickets. I was going mad. But you can get some money off it."

Second boy: "You catch a guy whose just come home from work and it's about 11 o'clock at night and you just happen to meet him and get his wage packet. You get a good £30 there. Or you can get their watches and sell them. But I always thought

you're not expecting to get much. You're just doing it to get a taxi fare home or something like that. You're not doing it to get £2000. You don't feel sorry for them. They don't feel sorry for you, do they? He's not thinking about you - so why should you think about him? You're not doing it to take it out of him, but you can't think well I'm sorry for this guy because then you won't do it."

First boy: "I never used to think



of being sorry for them. I just used to laugh. I'm always in a good mood when I do it. But we're not doing it for revenge or anything. We're just doing it for kicks. Or if you want something."

Second boy: "I never really thought it was worth it. Say there are four of you walking down the road and you roll a guy and you get £10 - four into 10 - you know what I mean?"

First boy: "... and after you buy your herbs ..."

Second boy: "And one guy says well I want this £2 to buy a jumper and this guy says boy I'm going home now, and there's two of you left with £5 between you. You can't have a good time on that."

First boy: "I always felt nervous about doing it. How's it going to be like? Is he going to put up a good fight? Some of them just say take

what I've got and you leave them alone. We never beat up anybody. Just a couple of slaps or punches."

Second boy: "Well sometimes we have to give them a few licks. Suppose there is four of you and this guy is a bit strong and he starts getting a bit rough, well may be you have to give him a couple of licks before he cools down. But if a guy grab you and fling you away you say boy, this guy him like a lion and you

Sir Lord Power, the Killer Sound: centre left, Beckford; centre right, in open coat, Eustace just run."

First boy: "That's why we did it to people about 40 or 50 mostly. I don't like to do things to old people. I wouldn't touch them."

Second boy: "They are the people who hate us the most. But I don't do nothing to them." ➡



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First boy: "I wouldn't think of touching them. I feel sorry for people like that. People who are always mousing, people like that I like to do things to. We don't touch our own people. I never thought of doing it to a black man."

Second boy: "A black man wouldn't do it to me. But I know a white man would do it to me. A black man know that we are all suffering the same. We all try and hustle in our own way."

First boy: "The best thing if somebody tries to do it to you is drop your money and run."

Second boy: "If them do it to you, just say, 'All right, all right.' I know some of them when they do it, even though you give them your money, they still kick you down. The best thing is to drop the money and run so they pick up the money and forget about you."

First boy: "We used to do it mostly at night time. Anywhere. In Holloway Road there's a block of flats and we got one guy and pulled him in there. He run up the steps but he couldn't get no further because the door was locked. We never done nothing. He had nothing on him. We just grab him and leave him on the path. He was sitting in a corner: 'No, no.' I says, 'Yeah, man.' He was a real big geezer. We just left him there. Sometimes they said, 'You'll be sorry.' Sometimes they tried to talk you out of it."

Second boy: "But all you wanted was the money. So you didn't have time to talk to him. Anything you do, you feel a bit nervous. But when you get in it, you don't feel nervous no more."

First boy: "It's just like doing a robbery. Except that it's not so much money."

Second boy: "Some guys do handbag snatching. I never."

First boy: "You never know. Somebody could do it to your mother. That's why I don't do it to no women."

Second boy: "I don't like nothing to do with my mother, man. My mother just out of it. Out of everything. She's just out of the question. You know what I mean? If you do it to a woman I can just imagine her going 'Aahhh!', shouting in the street. Rassklatt. All them things there."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

One of the few white people who come into Harambee is a middle-aged lady who on one occasion called

in to give a white-painted wooden chair, on another a large rich fruit cake which was soon demolished. Sometimes she takes a car-load of boys for a ride in her 1100. "I do like to take them out," she explained. "I take them to the Tower of London and St Paul's. But they won't get out of the car. They just ask me to take them to see the Old Bailey and Scotland Yard."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Herman: "I don't see the black kids as criminals, not professionals. Six of them went to break into a house together when one could very easily have done the job. Six of them

will go and stop a taxi driver when two could do it. There is no professional criminal intent there. What happens is that at some point they are hungry, and need money; a boy is on the street and has no food to eat and has nowhere to live. I go along to the courts every day and the kind of boys I see and the nature of the offence - I don't see any criminal ability there at all. But I don't think the courts recognise their predicament. This whole thing of the black youths in this society is new.

"The black youths who come here have lots and lots of anger towards white society. But they are empty

people, people without any ingredients of their own society, and their emptiness is bound to create friction. When they come here we let them know that it is pointless all running around in a circle hating the white man. Here we live together, share our food together, share discussions together. The first purpose of Harambee is to give the young blacks the strength to go and face a society which is very complex and which they don't understand.

"And the second purpose of Harambee is to assist them to find themselves, to know themselves. White education tends to let them



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believe they are white. We need a system which lets them know they are black, so that they can communicate with a white man from an equal level.

"The boys who come here from borstal are the most difficult ones. They are far from being in a state when they can face the outside. The borstal just tells them to fit in. And when they come out they just enter the circle again, at the same point where they started. The whole purpose of Harambee is to get them to break out of the circle of crime, borstal, crime, borstal. But that circle is difficult to break, because the circle itself is built in the structure of society. Black people hold very little of the wealth of society, and the young people see that. They see themselves or their elders having no wealth of that society, playing no part in officialdom, holding no power. To enable them to break out of the circle you have to explain to them what they are in society, how that circle can affect them, and destroy them. But it's very hard for them if unlike you or me they don't have the ingredients to get a job that will satisfy them in some way.

"There is a dimension of race re-

lations in this country that doesn't tell people the true situation, hoping that they won't get bitter. But I think we have to move on to a different dimension where we tell the truth. The truth is that the society is foreign to us, it is not our society and we shouldn't expect our steak on the plate in this society. We have got to make our own plate and fill it ourselves and not depend on other people to fill it for us. By telling the boys the reality of the situation they might become more disillusioned, but it might also spark them off to do something about their situation.

"We had opposition on the council when we set up because we were looking after young blacks. We were taking people off the streets who were just beginning criminal records, others had convictions for serious woundings, crimes like that, and we felt that in many cases they just wanted their own people to relate to. Some of them may come in here and swear at me and I much prefer that because I feel that they throw out what is in them. When they walk in that door they throw everything at us - the anger, the fear, the frustration, the conflicts. If black people live on a vibration of hating the

white man they will blind themselves to their own situation. It's because we see ourselves in an inferior situation that it's easy for us to talk about hating the white man. But one cannot live in that rhetoric for ever.

"You have to give the boys a chance to throw off all their feelings and let them walk around and even let them fight among themselves. I wait until it comes from them, until they say Brother Herman, can you help me to get a job? But before they go out there we have to make absolutely certain they understand they are black. I think this is the greatest complex young people have in this country. They go around thinking they are white, and when disappointment hits them it blows them to pieces. Just like the rest of us who came to England.

"The boys' problems are getting worse in some cases. I feel that if it wasn't for us there would be many more boys who would be lying down in prison now. But it's a vast, vast area we are working in. And we have seen those who go back to borstal or prison and we feel we have failed. We haven't the time to spend with them, or the facilities to help them.

"My ambition is to empty the

jails. We are locking up young people, young black people, often for some petty things. All black people should be ashamed of themselves because they are our people and we as the older people have fallen short. We have failed to give them the ingredients to cope with the stresses, the harshness and all the difficulties of society. If we had a building six times the size of this and a workshop, we could do something. We need a lot more facilities and if we had them we could get more black youths out of the jails - I am talking of the young blacks, not the young whites, because I don't understand their vibrations. It's a black project, it's a project to let you know you are black. It's a project to let you know that white society doesn't understand you and it's best when you understand yourself because then you can participate in white society."

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

"I remember," says Sam, "back in Antigua, when we used to go down to the beach and catch crabs and cook them over a wood fire and put them on a leaf to cool and then eat them."

"That," says Herman, "was long time ago."



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There's something especially heart-rending about sick children. As Ted Gould quickly found when young Michael started having attacks of tonsillitis. Tears, fretfulness, sleepless nights – the small boy's pain and discomfort turned Ted Gould into a very anxious father indeed. And the fact that the ailment

**At 3am
Ted Gould didn't
agree that
tonsillitis was
a minor ailment.**

was only supposed to be minor just didn't alter his feelings.

It was lucky that foresight was one of Ted Gould's strong points. He had taken the precaution of joining BUPA. With all that that means in providing the advantages of private medical care – and protection against the high costs involved.

So when the doctor advised that Michael should have his tonsils out, there was no delay in getting him in to hospital. At a time to fit in with the family arrangements, so his mother was free to visit him as often as the very flexible visiting hours allowed.

Ted Gould was able to breathe a sigh of relief, put aside his anxieties and find peace of mind.

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'I DON'T WANT TO GO BACK'

Four young people born in the West Indies talk about trying to make it in Britain



Lydia: "I've never had any trouble . . . I like everything here"

"I'm happy here," says Lydia, 20, a secretary. "I love it here." She came from Grenada when she was nine, four years after her mother. "I was the only black kid in our school at first. I enjoyed school. I enjoyed everything."

She learnt shorthand and typing at college and left at 17 to begin temporary work. Now living in a flat in Harlesden, she works permanently at the Royal Society for the Blind. "The money I could get elsewhere, I'm not getting here. But I feel I'm doing something helpful."

"When I came to England I was the only black kid in the road but I've never had any trouble. I used to be a bit aggressive and if somebody said, you black so-and-so, I might say you so-and-so back. But as I've grown up I've learned to get used to things. You've got to get on with who you're with. My parents are very strict about that."

"I used to mind getting up every morning when it was cold, thinking I could be back in the West Indies, but now I'm quite happy. I went back to Grenada last year but it's not much improved and I was dying to come back. I've got used to here. You're quite free here unless you get involved. I've never been in trouble with the police. My parents are law-abiding citizens."

"They always tried to give me what they could and if they couldn't then I'd wait. But thank God I haven't got any brothers. If I had - they might go round with a lot of black kids and pinch things."

Since the spring, however, there has been a cloud of anxiety on Lydia's horizon. She was engaged in January 1972 to a singer from Jamaica, Dave Collins, and they were married in April 1973. Lydia is expecting a baby next year. But they may have to leave Britain because the Home Office will not renew Dave's work permit. Dave and Lydia thought the record company was handling everything, they say, and when they found out no arrangements had been made, it was too late. They've had a letter from the Jamaican High Commission saying nothing more can be done.

"I'm very worried now. Before I've been carefree. I took the place for granted before. Now I realise how free and happy I was. I can leave my job and find another one. I've never really depended on the National Health but you know it's there if you really need it. I don't know what's going to happen. Where am I going to end up? I don't want to go back to the West Indies. I don't even want to think about it. I like everything here."

Trevor, with the other members of Spellbound, was sitting in a flat in Queen's Park watching Boycott bar in the Second Test. The group had been rehearsing for their next gig, in Leicester the coming Friday night. They had already played such well-known London venues as Mr Bees in Peckham, the Apollo Club, and the Q Club in Paddington, and they had appeared on BBC television. "Things don't happen easily. So far it's been not bad and not good. But we're getting more recognised."

Trevor, 22, came to Britain two years ago. He left school in Kingston at 15, began work as a welder, took up music at 17, was quickly successful, but found the rewards in Jamaica too low. "You can go further here. Though it wasn't nice when I first came. You get called things like black bastard. I wasn't really used to those things. There's no need. I

wasn't expecting it. There are English people in Jamaica and they're not treated like that by us."

He worked at first as a session player, making £15 each time he played. "But you work for two days and then you're off to another group and that's not nice." He formed Spellbound late in 1972. "I'll give it a year and a half. If it doesn't work - well, I'll leave."

He has regrets about leaving Jamaica . . . "I didn't mind - but then I mind. I've left my mother there, my father, brother, sister, auntie, uncle, nephew, niece, son . . . my son as well. I'm hoping to go back to see them soon - next year some time. I missed my family, coming to a strange country and not knowing any people. But I'm more cool now. Here is nice. The weather is horrible. But you're more free. You can do a lot of things."

"I've had no trouble with the police. Some of my friends have, all the time. If you go to enjoy yourself, you've a copper on your back. The kids - they panic. We stick it out for ourselves."

"I want to make it in a black way here. If you want to make a living you must make it by yourself. I know a lot of white guys but it's best to mix with your own kind. That way, there's no bad feeling. As a black you can't really reach that far. But I'm trying."



Trevor: "I'll give it a year . . . If it doesn't work, I'll leave"



Tamara: "I'm not uptight about being black. It doesn't matter"

Model Tamara came to England from Guyana when she was 12. "There were lots of riots, trouble between the Africans and the Indians, and my parents were only too glad to get out. My mother was African and my father Indian descent, and it wasn't very nice. My father had a business which was threatened and he decided to get us out."

She had always wanted to be a doctor. "Ever since I was eight. I went to school here and did my O-levels and A-levels. But I can't stand the sight of blood."

Tall and willowy, she took a month's course at a Bond Street modelling school and then joined Black Boys agency, which specialises in black models. That was three years ago, and since then she has worked in Europe and the USA as well as Britain. She also dances and sings, and hopes to be an actress.

The first time she was made aware of being black was nine years ago - a year after she came to Britain. "I hadn't looked at myself as being black - just a person. And this boy made a funny face, sort of looking down at me, and moved away. It was very strange and I was very upset because no-one had done anything like it before. I had to sit down, and I thought about it, but now prejudice doesn't bother me. I ➡



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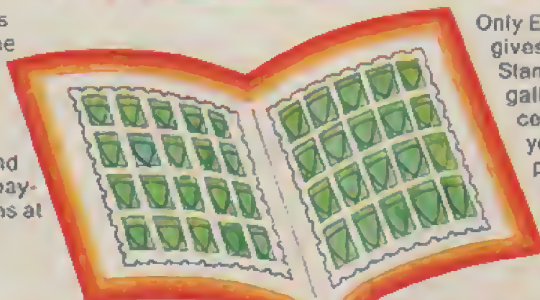
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